(vi) **IT for Integrated Rural Development (Samadhan Centres).** Implemented at Mahatma Gandhi Chitrakoot Gramodaya Vishwa Vidyalaya Chitrakoot, Madhya Pradesh. preliminary Study conducted and report received. Total Outlay 17.64 Lakhs. Under the project, three samadhan kendras will be set up in the Majagaya block and a resource centre at the university to provide sustainable operation of samadhan kendras. The project will be a venture of IT backed Gram Swaraj in terms of resource inventory and data centre to entrepreneurial sector. volunatry agency sector, panchayat Raj sector.

(vii) **Design of Solar cum Electrical Dryer** Central Plantation Crop Research Institute Kerala. Project is ongoing. Total Outlay 4.20 Lakhs. Development of solar multi crop drier with electronic temperature control using forced air convection and convection heaters for coconut and later, arecaunt pepper and cardamom.

(viii) **Solar Powered Grain Moisture Measurement System.** Implemented by R & DC Noida. Project is completed. Total Outlay 15 Lakhs. To develop a micro processor based, solar powered grain moisture measurement system which is handy, rugged, low power consuming and can be used as a stand alone system in the field which is ideal for rural conditions.

(ix) **Community Information Centres.** Implemented by NICSI. Project is ongoing. Total Outaly 22000 Lakhs. (estimated cost). An ambitious programme has been undertaken by the Ministry of Information Technology to establish Community Information Centres in 446 blocks in all the North East States to promote Information Technology and its applications. Another 40 such centres will be set up in Sikkim.

Media Lab Asia

537. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have recently set up the Media Lab Asia (MLA) on the lines of the Indian Institute of Information Technology, to deploy information technology in the every day life of the common man;

(b) if so, the details of the organisation, reportedly registered under section 25 of the Indian Companies Act, main objectives, structure, faculty, source of funding, etc. and

(c) the time frame to operationalise the Media Lab Asia?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): (a) to (c) Setting up of Media Lab Asia was approved on May 31st 2001 and launched on June, 24th 2001 with the signing of a agreement between Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) USA and Ministry of Information Technology, Government of India. It was decided to set up not-for profit organisation for the Media Lab Asia to bring the benefits of state of the art technology to the common man and thus help in bridging the digital divide. Subsequently, Media Lab Asia has been registered in Mumbai, under section 25 of the Company's Act, 1956.

The main objective of the Media Lab Asia is to carry out research which focuses on bringing the benefits of emerging trends in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) including non-computing and bio-technology to the common man. The thrust areas of Media Lab Asia are creation, invention, innovation and refinement of futuristic technologies for the benefits of common man especially in the areas of health, education and micro entrepreneurship.

Media Lab Asia has been conceived in two phases: One year exploratory programme and a subsequent full scope programme which will be taken up based on mutual consent by Government of India and MIT, USA. Government of India has approved the one year initial phase with a budgetary support of Rs. 65 crores.

The composition of the Board of the Directors is as follows:

(i) Shri Pramod Mahahan, Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, Information Technology and Communications — Chairman

(ii) Profs. Nicholas Negroponte, Chairman, MIT, Media Lab Asia Vice Chairman.

(iii) Shri Rajeeva Ratna Shah, Secretary of Ministry of InformationTechnology—Member

(iv) V. Ranganathan, Chief Secretary of Maharashtra State—Member

(v) Prof. Alex (Sandy) Pentland, Academic Director, MIT Media Lab Asia USA—Vice Chairman

(i), (iii) and (iv) are Ex-officio posts.

The day-to-day activities are being managed by a Management Committee consisting of Prof. Alex Pentland, Prof. Sanjay Dhande, Director,

IIT, Kanpur, Shri Ramakrishnan, Sr. Director, MIT and Dr. Michale Best, MIT Media Lab, USA.

The Head Quarters of Media Lab Asia is located in Mumbai in one of the Industrial Parks.

The process of acquiring identifying research nodes, their space procurement of equipment of the initial people, refinement of projects and procurement of equipment for research activities is in progress. The first board meeting was held on 27th September, 2001.

Smart Card

538. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had set up a group for examining the standards and identifying the sectors for smart card applications in India;

(b) if so, whether the Committee has submitted its report;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether Government have accepted the recommendations; and

(e) if so, by what time final decision in this regard is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): (a) Yes, Sir . A Committee has been set up to formulate common standards for multi-application smart cards in India.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) to (e) Do not arise.

Restriction on membership of the trade unions

539. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to restrict membership of the trade unions to employees only and restrict outside members in trade unions; and

(b) if so, by when, a final decision is likely to be taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI MUNI LALL) (a) and (b) The Trade Unions (Amendment) Bill, 2001 has been passed by the Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha on 2.8.2001 and 24.8.2001 respectively. The Hon'ble President has given assent on 3.9.2001 and the Trade